

# The Collegian commentary

By Bob Wetmore  
Managing Editor

"Carol, age 19, was recently arrested and convicted of shoplifting. Let her tell you about it in her own words.

"It was like a bad trip. Here I am with this stupid \$3 belt stuck in my purse... and I got caught.

"And you wouldn't believe what they did next. They called the police. I never thought they did that just for shoplifting."

"Now, I've got a record—me! My mother's so ashamed she won't step outside the house. But even worse, my boss found out. Now, I'm out of a job—the best job I ever had."

But Carol didn't just steal from a store. Since shoplifters cause higher prices... and shoplifters take everybody's money."

This could very well have been a Behrend student. But it's not. Though, with shoplifting reaching (or has it already reached) epidemic levels on this campus, it's a possibility.

Even as much as eight years ago, and probably before that, there has been a noticeable percentage of rip-off artists on this campus. And what better target for such skilled persons as the Behrend Bookstore.

Bookstore officials have pointed out that there has always been a constant incidence of shoplifting, even in such a small confine as the bookstore.

Students seem to be brazen enough to lift things in front of employees and student witnesses.

One case involved a group of students who worked together to perform a "lift" approximately three years ago. In this instance, a certain group had performed malicious activities around campus, and as a finale before their departure, the bookstore seemed a likely target.

The identity of these persons was known, and it was assumed that there were witnesses of their other malicious acts around campus. And yet, were they prosecuted? No!! It was not the fault of the bookstore personnel, for they duly reported the in-

cident to Security. It would probably be appropriate at this time to ask where security had its thumb placed.

Also, in another case, there was a total lack of responsibility taken by our beloved security.

A student had brought a book to the bookstore, which she wished to sell back. Unbeknown to the store personnel, the book was "hot." Several hours after the incident, a student was able to identify the stolen book as his, and information involving the case was turned over to security.

After contacting the students who originally sold the book back, it was found that a second student had lifted the book and given it to the first to sell back because "he needed the money." Security recovered the money (only \$4.00) and promptly returned to placing its thumb. Was anything else done? Possibly. It was thought that the student was placed on a year's probation—but we all know what people have access to this information.

Now, what did this case have to do with shoplifting? A lot. With such incentive, we should all go shoplifting. Just think, if we're caught, we'll probably even be able to keep the merchandise.

Now, I'm not trying to put down Security, but show me a security agency that is composed partially of students, when it is students that they are trying to police? Incidences seem to indicate otherwise (need I elaborate?)

But shoplifting on campus isn't the only activities that Behrendites engage in—local stores will attest to that fact.

One local store keeps a running file of Behrend offenders. And, believe it or not, they were more than anxious to provide information on Behrend activities in their store.

It seems that our model student has a tendency to lift health and beauty aids, records and tapes. Only petty things. Occasionally, some small items will be paid for at the checkouts, either as a decoy, or some form of diluting the guilt.

Unfortunately, most cases which are caught are females,

possibly due to the fact that women carry purses and wear large, bulky coats; all the easier to quickly conceal an item.

Most Behrend students which are apprehended are out of town residents, probably due to the fact that commuters have very little reason to be desperate enough to engage themselves in such amusements. (could this be an indication of the availability of dorm-oriented activities?)

On the lighter side of the picture, this store to which we are referring prosecutes all cases. And even sadder, most all of these cases are over eighteen, so news of the offense rarely makes it back to the parents, and only in very rare cases, back to the University.

It would seem to me a sad fact that the University doesn't use its landlord power more extensively.

What gives a certain faction the power to declare Behrend a separate entity; immune from the laws of the commonwealth? How much are local authorities paid to keep their noses clean?

And lastly, is all of this carefully formulated to make Behrend look like the unblemished virgin of the area colleges (and a contribution to intentional isolationism)?

From shoplifting to isolationism. Quite a span, isn't it? Well, don't forget, Richard Nixon was President of the United States, too.

Editor's note: Due to the fact that the Collegian was swamped with material for this issue, we regret the fact that a large amount of letters were not printed. The Collegian would like to assure the Behrend community that these letters will be printed in their totality next issue, pending that conditions allow for insertion of the material. The Collegian welcomes all letters on editorials, and allows equal space for rebuttal.



## From the desk of the Editor

By Paul Corbran  
Editor-in-Chief

Last week I wrote on the isolation of Behrend College - which may very well be self-inflicted, I've learned. I have received response on this and would like to thank all those involved. I hope there will be prompt action on this very injurious problem soon.

Today I would like to broaden my topic to something that concerns the community - the whole country, for that matter. Some of you may recognize the subject matter from a speech class last term or the editorial page of the Erie Times last summer. This is the first time I've put it in the Collegian, though.

The topic of my article, this issue, is public worker strikes. This stems from the recent strike of Erie County employees. I have no compassion at all for these people and I condemn their actions with utmost sincerity.

The strike at the County Hospital is the most inconsiderate act, and the most despicable. There is a staff of forty, or so, supervisory personnel to care for four hundred elderly patients, many of them unable to even get out of bed. To quote myself, there is a big difference between a strike in a hospital and that of one in a factory. The latter would carry financial injury to the corporation which will eventually be passed on to the consumer. The former carries a more direct and severe injury to people. People are suffering because of the lack of proper paramedical care. We're not talking about machinery here, we're talking about people's lives.

Moving on to strikes in other areas, such as police or fire protection... Last summer there was a strike of the fire fighters in Kansas City. A young boy perished... to hell with the euphemisms, a young boy DIED because surrounding area companies honored the strike and would not respond to in-city calls. This irresponsibility makes me sick! How many other people have died, unnecessarily, because they couldn't get help fast enough?

There are other actions to take other than that of striking. The Millcreek Police Department, for example, has a system where if and when their contract runs out, the issue falls directly into binding arbitration in the event of no settlement. They are not allowed to strike.

I don't believe that public workers should have been granted the "right" to strike. This, so called, right infringes upon the rights of you and me, as citizens of the community, to proper care and protection. These people have succeeded in taking the word servant out of "public servant" and replacing it with headache.

Well, on the lighter side... I don't know if you've noticed, but our SGA president has donned a new look. That's right... Mike Woods went out and got his hair cut and shaved his beard off. "Senioritis" must really be getting to him - I think, though, that Gillette made him an offer.

Oh, well, enough said.



## A Word From Our President

By Mike Woods  
SGA President

Hi gang. It's me again with more good news from the land of the free and the home of the criminally insane (University Park). If you remember, last week the Ambassador program was here from University Park—Well, now State College is offering you a free, all expense paid trip to the Centre County Campus—that's right—The Dirt Cheap Travel Agency will transport you and the sex partner of your choice to dismal, snow-bound State College via dog sled (pulled by a team of 3 drunken, rabid Irish wolf hounds), where you'll be staying in make shift cots located on the spacious 15 acre golf course adjacent to the Nittany Lion Inn—YES—"To Transfer or Not to Transfer." Pardon my inane ramblings—it all started when someone stole my hair. All levity aside, there is an excellent opportunity for all students considering transfer to University Park within the next year to really become well acquainted with all facets of life in State College through Commonwealth Campus Day.

After two years of extensive planning by the USG Department of Commonwealth Campuses, the Commonwealth Campus Day, to be held on Saturday February 14th, has become a reality. The events will be as follows—In the morning, all will be assembled in Recreation Hall and have the opportunity to discuss campus life with representatives from fraternities, sororities, dorm councils, campus organizations, (i.e. OTIS, USG, SHRS, etc.), academic divisions and others. In the afternoon, students will be taken on bus tours of the campus

(thus the dorm complexes) and the many apartment buildings and "high rises" offering information on rental prices and facilities for tenants. The day will be climaxed by an all night dance marathon for charity (on campus) when students may become acclimated to UP social life. The SGA is in the process of arranging a chartered bus for mass transportation for this weekend, although arranging your own transportation is advisable. I would strongly encourage attendance by potential transferees as many are victimized by geographic confusion and miserly landlords upon their first visit to Happy Valley.

I would like to make an explanation by way of apology to presidents and members of new organizations chartered under the SGA this year. It was our responsibility to accommodate those organizations that have long existed at the college and made substantial contributions to the student body. I must express my enthusiasm and gratitude regarding the positive efforts by students to establish new activities for the Behrend College and I personally wish we could absorb all of your operating expenses. Unfortunately, our activities allocation is not substantial enough to subsidize even our "established" clubs or offer the students much in the way of new activities. I hope you all will continue your enthusiasm through the remainder of this academic year and hopefully, next year's SGA will be able to allot you the financial assistance necessary. Good job!

Finally, I would like to com-

mend by way of consolation, the Behrend College Basketball team for their fine performance against Frostburg State on Saturday night. The entire team gave it their best effort and lost a heart breaker by 1 point in overtime. I believe this to be one of those contests in which the best team was not the victor. Good job guys!

## From Memphis to Behrend new sounds

It's a long way from Memphis to here. Two Poor Boys a long way from home are starting here instead. On February 6, at 9:00 p.m. in the RUB, an extraordinary group will provide a musical jamboree of the music that shook all of Europe and America. Not since Furry Lewis came to town has the area had anything like this. Two Poor Boys a Long Way from Home, is as if minstrel shows still flocked across America. Three hours of continuous old time and blues music. An evening of joy to one and all, come early and stay late, the music will flow on and on. Featuring Bandjo Joe, Bogus Blind Rick, Rev. RR Brown, and a host of others in solo and joint performance. It's a long way from Memphis to here.

## Behrend Collegian

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### Editorial Policy

The editorials appearing in this newspaper will be opinionated and therefore subject to criticism. All letters that are typewritten of 200 words or less, and submitted to the newspaper staff will be printed with the exception of those that are repetitions or in poor taste. The staff reserves the right to correct

or delete portions of all letters for publication purposes.

All letters must be signed, but names will be withheld upon request. Term standing, major, and hometown must be included.

Signed columns represent the view of the author only and do not necessarily reflect the Editorial policy of the Behrend Collegian.